Recording Response Activities at Attendance Management Plan Thresholds

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga
Ministry of Education

Background

From 2026, schools must record response activities at Attendance Management Plan (AMP) thresholds in their Student Management System (SMS). The AMP threshold response activity data will be automatically shared with the Ministry alongside daily attendance data to support monitoring of the effectiveness of responses and to help identify where additional support may be required.

This guidance supports schools to implement AMP threshold response activities by stepping through:

1 **Understanding** how to record threshold response activities

2 **Developing** your recording approach for threshold response activities

3 **Implementing** and reporting your threshold response activities

| **1** UNDERSTAND | **2** DEVELOPING | **3** IMPLEMENT |

Understanding how to record threshold response activities

Schools monitor student attendance every day and are expected to understand the reasons for all absences as part of their usual attendance processes. This includes following up on each absence (both justified and unjustified) and responding appropriately in line with their AMP.

From 2026, schools must also record AMP response activities when a student reaches the threshold of 5, 10, or 15 days of absence within a term.

SMS providers have introduced new features to make it easier for schools to record their AMP threshold response activities. These improvements help schools quickly record and analyse response activities at the thresholds. For examples of SMS response activity types and how they can be applied, refer to the table included in this guidance.

Developing your recording approach for threshold response activities

Schools have flexibility on how they embed AMP reporting into daily workflows. It is important for schools to record interventions as they happen and assign roles and responsibility for entering data so response actions at thresholds are not missed. We recommend recording within 48hrs of the response for data quality purposes.

To prepare:

Confirm you understand the SMS updates required for threshold response activities

Set up any specific AMP responses that your school wants to use in the SMS

Assign roles and responsibility for entering data at each threshold, for example classroom teachers, school leaders, or office staff

Train staff to record interventions when students reach absence thresholds such as 5, 10, 15 or more days

Embed these steps into your school's AMP workflow to maintain timeliness of reporting and data integrity

Implement and report

Once your systems and processes are ready, focus on consistent implementation. Record interventions and escalation steps in your SMS as soon as they occur. Communicate expectations to staff and whānau so everyone understands the importance of accurate reporting.

Use SMS features to make the process straightforward and monitor compliance regularly to ensure data quality. Over time, review your AMP to assess its effectiveness and adjust as needed.

Recording Response Activities

School SMS will record AMP response activities at two levels:

- **Activity Response Type** – a fixed set of options in the SMS. This field cannot be edited.

- **Description** – editable field where schools can use the suggested wording or create their own.

The Ministry provides a default list of Descriptions, that can be tailored to suit your AMP and local context. Only school users with SMS admin privileges can edit this list. For instructions on how to make changes, refer to your SMS guidance or contact your SMS provider.

You should adapt the Descriptions so they reflect the response activities your school undertakes, rather than trying to fit your responses into the default list if it doesn't align or lacks the detail you require. You can also add notes to response activities for your own reference. These notes are not automatically shared with the Ministry. For data quality purposes, make sure threshold response activities are recorded within the recommended timeframe.

The table below shows examples of current Response Types, the default Descriptions, and when each might be used. While Response Types cannot be edited, you can update the Descriptions to align with the threshold response activities you set out in your AMP.

For example, if your AMP includes specific threshold response activities to reduce transport barriers, you may prefer to record them separately like "School van pick up" and "Subsidised bus card" and remove a broader option such as "Reduced transport barriers."

Activity Response Type	Description	Example Use
Sent written communication	Sent notification to whānau Sent escalated notification to whānau Sent formal warning notice to whānau Sent letter acknowledging upcoming absence	• Often at early thresholds (e.g., 5 days) to alert caregivers quickly • When absences persist and require stronger messaging (e.g., 10+ days) • At higher thresholds or when legal escalation is being considered • When notified of planned absence to maintain engagement and expectations
Conversation with whānau	Initial conversation with whānau Escalated conversation with whānau Held whānau hui	• Common at early thresholds to understand reasons for absence • When absences continue despite initial contact (e.g., 10+ days) • For complex cases requiring collaborative problem-solving, often at higher thresholds
Developed individual support plan		• Consider when barriers are identified, often after initial contact
Used in-school resources to reduce barriers	Reduced transport barriers Reduced food barriers Reduced clothing barriers Reduced equipment barriers Referred to in-school social worker Referred to in-school counsellor Referred to in-school mentor Reduced other barriers	• When practical barriers are impacting attendance, often after initial engagement • When wellbeing or social factors are identified as barriers • For any additional needs impacting attendance

Activity Response Type	Description	Example Use
Positive reinforcement	Reinforcement conversation Reinforcement letter/certificate Other positive action	• Useful at any threshold to encourage improved attendance • When attendance improves or goals are met
Referred to external agencies	Referred to attendance services Referred to local provider Referred to iwi provider Referred to alternative education/ activity centre Referred to Ministry regional office Referred to external mental health support Referred to other education agency Referred to other non-education agency	• When absences reach 15+ days or earlier if required • When additional community or cultural support is needed • For complex cases requiring Ministry involvement • When wellbeing concerns are significant • When specialist support is needed beyond school capacity
Initiated prosecution		• Only after all other interventions have been exhausted and absences remain high
Unsuccessful contact attempt		• Record whenever attempts to reach whānau fail, at any threshold
Monitor current approach		• When an intervention is in place and being reviewed for effectiveness • Consider when there is an outcome of an absence that requires no further action at a threshold and add that as a new Description field with details in the notes
Other		• For any additional action not listed above • Consider when there is an outcome of an absence that requires no further action at a threshold and add that as a new Description field with details in the notes

More Support

For more help and practical tools, check out these resources:

- Your SMS provider can demonstrate how the Attendance Management Plan functionality works in your SMS. Contact your provider for support with your SMS.
- Attendance Code Guidance.pdf and the 1 April 2025 Attendance code tree.pdf – for support with entering and managing attendance codes

- Implementing an Attendance Management Plan.pdf – detailed steps for developing and publishing your Attendance Management Plan
- How to use the STAR.pdf – for practical advice on applying the STAR framework including roles and responsibilities
- Contact your Regional offices - Ministry of Education for tailored support and advice